

A
S U P P L E M E N T
TO THE
REVEREND DR. COKE'S
STATE OF DEWSBURY-HOUSE.

By MR. ALEXANDER MATHER.

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S U P P L E M E N T, &c. *

THAT the Reader may have a full view of all the important particulars relative to the present dispute, from September 1787 to September 1788, it is necessary to observe,

1. That the persons to whom Mr. Valton appeals in his letter, were the chief, if not the *only*, remaining trustees of the preaching-house at Dawgreen, who were therefore the chief persons that were engaged in the propositions for the present preaching-house.

2. That they, and others with them, elected whom they pleased for trustees for the new house, without ever consulting Mr. Wesley, or any of the preachers, on the head, as far as ever I heard, although both Mr. Wesley and the preachers were so

* The following Supplement is published in order to set forth some *essential* circumstances omitted in the Doctor's Statement; which circumstances many suppose necessary to be known by the candid Public, before they can form a proper judgment of the whole affair; as also, to correct a mistake which (though innocent in itself) may be construed into a falsehood; and the Doctor be branded with invidious epithets, as others concerned in this transaction have been on like occasions.

nearly concerned in the affair—a proceeding very uncommon among us, as is also their holding *all* their meetings without any preacher's being with them. Their first number was nineteen, thus self-elected, whom, after a time, they found it expedient to increase to twenty-five, for a very obvious reason, *as we hear*, viz. “that all the men of weight might “be on their side”—for we have not been permitted to see the deed, which is said to be made, although we have oft requested it, as shall hereafter be shewn.

3. I now proceed, in the next place, to rectify the innocent mistake in the Doctor's statement. What he calls, page 7th, a letter of Mr. Wesley's, containing interlineations, the copy whereof he intimates was lost, was certain propositions delivered by the trustees to, and read before, Mr. Wesley, when he was last at Dewsbury; to which, on the *first* reading, he acceded, on supposition they contained nothing contrary to what he had before agreed to. (This may easily account for his signing Mr. Atlay's letter, on the 30th of last July, *in the midst of the hurry of the business of the Conference.*) But objections being made by some who were present, they were re-considered and interlined by Mr. Wesley in substance as the Doctor says *, and returned to the trustees, in whose possession I saw them on the 17th of October last.

4. I now come to fill up the space between that time and the 30th of last July, by a brief narrative of the steps taken to meet the trustees, as far as my brethren employed with me in the business, and myself, could possibly go, with justice and fidelity to our trust.

* The interlineation contained the same concession as is mentioned in Mr. Atlay's letter, which has been published in the Doctor's statement, only the former named what the latter necessarily supposed, *who were to be the judges.*

1st, The first step to be considered is, The trustees getting a deed drawn up to be sent to the Manchester Conference, and leaving out those interlineations of Mr. Wesley's. This deed Mr. Greenwood brought to Manchester, and gave notice of it to the Conference, at the same time desiring to know whom he was to deliver it to, in order that it might be perused. I being then appointed for that purpose, he accordingly delivered it into my hands. In consequence of this, there has been since an outcry made, as if some mighty wrong had been done in Mr. Wesley's not seeing that draught. It is true, his eyes did not behold it. But it is also true, he did see it, in the only sense of which the crowd of important business then on his hands would admit, *by his agent* appointed by himself for that purpose. And he must see and do many things in this way in such large concerns as he has, and more especially at a Conference.

But what report was made of it?—As soon as I entered on the conditions of the trust declared in the draught, I was convinced (though till then I had not heard a tittle of what had passed on the business) that it tended to the same disturbance which had been so lately in that neighbourhood, and which *now it has* occasioned. This I told Mr. Greenwood and others concerned, adding, “ I would have nothing “ to do with it,” being resolved not to embroil myself in such an affair, especially as I had, on the report of building there, desired Mr. Valton to be sure of the settlement before he took any steps towards it. This, it appears from his letter published by the Doctor, he thought he had done, by the repeated assurances he had received from men of whose veracity he was so confident.

2dly, On the above account I returned the deed, desiring Mr. Broadbent, who was going through Dewsbury, to call on the trustees, with whom he was intimate, and see if he could settle matters with them. He did

call, and met them, or some of the principal of them ; but I never heard a tittle of what passed concerning the trustees, the house, or any of their concerns, till the 5th of October, when I received a letter from Mr. Greenwood, begging my aid and assistance, being in great distress of mind concerning the affairs of the preaching-house. Mr. Wesley, he observed (on account of the trustees not complying with his reasonable request, *viz.* that no preacher should be sent away till he was tried, and found guilty, before his peers, or the neighbouring assistant preachers), had ordered him and Mr. Percival to leave Dewsbury on the 23d of October, which he was resolved to do, being determined to obey Mr. Wesley, and to stand or fall with his brethren. Compassion to him, and regard for the cause in general, and *that* in particular, overcame all my former resolutions at Manchester, and so far prevailed with me, as to make the bold adventure to step in between Mr. Wesley and the trustees, then hoping that the trustees would make some concessions, and being still more confident in Mr. Wesley (as a father), that he would accept of them, if ever so small. But it is sure, I never heard of one concession ; no, not the least, to this day. Alas ! thus confident as I was, I did not *then* know, what I have had full proof of since—that the matter was fixed, and that one unsuspected acted behind the curtain.

I sent a man and horse with a letter to Mr. Greenwood and the trustees, informing them that I would write to Mr. Wesley for liberty to have a hearing of their matters, before his orders should be fully executed ; and that Mr. Greenwood should remain till then, and I would bear any blame he might be liable to incur from Mr. Wesley by this delay. This message being dispatched, I wrote to Mr. Wesley, and obtained his consent.

Things bearing this favourable appearance, the day of meeting was appointed. The preachers nominated

minated by Mr. Wesley met at nine o'clock. The trustees (or some of them), with others of *their* friends whom *they chose*, came to us after twelve o'clock. Prayer being ended, the business was opened, and a good deal of conversation passed relative to it, but seemingly to no purpose; for our brethren the trustees seemed quite fixed, and wholly reserved as to their designs, notwithstanding *we all* were openness itself towards them. At last it was agreed, that the draught above mentioned should be read, and that we should shew wherein it appeared to us defective (for so we found it to be in many very material points). This occasioned many things to be pointed out, which could only be thoroughly understood by those who had been conversant in such business. And such illustrations were given, that we often seemed quite to meet in our ideas. Yet, strange as it may seem, they as oft fled off again; so that we parted as we met, at near five o'clock, without any apparent ill-will on either side, as we all had been mercifully preserved from any undue warmth through the whole. Before we parted, I was desirous of taking the sense of each trustee separately; in doing which, I perceived, what we did not know before, that many of those who met us were not trustees.

When several of the preachers, as well as of the trustees, were gone, Mr. Heald came to me, and, in the name of the trustees, desired I would draw up the particulars which had been offered, that they might have them to peruse, and if possible meet them. This I promised to do as soon as I had leisure, and either bring them or send them.

3dly, I was resolved to accommodate matters with them, if it could be, without sacrificing the rights of humanity, and the Methodist plan of itinerancy, both of which I held dear, but saw they must fall if what the trustees wished or expressed was granted. I considered all the objections started, and
fears

fears suggested, in our conversations, *viz.* “ This “ is giving you our house. You may do what you “ please with its profits, especially after the debt “ is paid. You may put a trustee out of society at “ your pleasure, and so deprive him of the power “ to act,” &c. To obviate *all* these difficulties, and secure them against *all* those fears, as well as to shew them (if they would see it) that we wanted neither their house nor its profits, either before or after the debt was paid—and, *above all*, that it should not be in our power to exercise even our common right of removing improper members from our societies, *as far as it respected them as trustees*, and that their seat-money should never come into our power, or even into the hands of a steward appointed by us (although these things Mr. Wesley has *ever* reserved to himself, and under his direction to the assistants for the time being, *viz.* to chuse his own and the society’s servants; for so our stewards account themselves for the Lord’s sake, having only their *labour* for their reward from man); to remove, I say, all these hindrances, and to render them entirely without excuse if they still refused to accommodate matters, we gave up all these points, and in fact every thing else, except the power of removing preachers *without an impartial trial*, as a proof of our desire of union and peace.

All this will plainly appear by the copy of the deed sent by me to the trustees, the whole of which would swell this narrative too much. I shall therefore only extract from it what relates to these essential points, which have been so variously represented to the people. After the deed has *secured to them the whole premises as absolutely as any deed can do*, the trusts are as follow, *viz.* On special trust, that the trustees shall have in themselves *full power*, 1. To mortgage the premises for any sum that appears unpaid, on examination of their accounts. 2. To let all the seats at the prices which shall be agreed upon by the

the majority of them. 3. To appoint two stewards annually from among themselves (and those not to be the stewards of the society), who should receive all the seat-rents, and apply the same towards paying interest, keeping the premises in decent repair, and allowing *what they pleased* (a blank being left for them to fill) for the preachers' support, the remainder to be applied yearly to lessen the principal debt. Of all which they were to keep regular accounts, which were to be settled once a year in a general meeting of the trustees, which the assistant was to give public notice of, and at which he was to be present to sign all the accounts *so* settled. 4. It was provided that whenever the debt of the house was paid, the rents of the seats, &c. should be applied as the majority of the trustees (so assembled) should agree, and in no other way. 5. That no assistant should on *any* account discharge a trustee from the society but *by the consent* of the majority of the trustees so assembled as above. Yea, that no meeting, or act of a meeting, should be held legal, but what was published as above, and notice sent of the time and place of meeting to *any* who might live so distant as not to be able conveniently to attend the *Sunday-noon's* preaching, allowing proper time for such distant trustees to attend. 6. That all elections of succeeding trustees should be made by a majority of such a meeting, and that the assistant (though president of all such meetings) should in *all* things have only *one* voice. 7. That Mr. Wesley, and after his decease the Conference as by him appointed, should have the nomination of the preachers to that house and premises, who should have the free use and benefit thereof for the purpose of therein preaching and expounding God's holy word (but the word *benefit* being construed at a future meeting to extend too far, was given up, though its signification, I think, is there limited to preaching, &c. therein), provided always, that the preachers,

ers, so sent from time to time, should preach such doctrines only as are contained in the four volumes of sermons, and the notes on the New Testament, published by Mr. Wesley. Provided always, that if any of the preachers so sent, should at any time be accused of immorality, the rules of the society being the test, or of advancing doctrines contrary to those contained in the above-mentioned books, then three of the nearest assistants shall be called in, who shall be *obliged* to attend, on having proper notice given to them, and shall hear the said accusations, and, *on proof* of the same, shall join the trustees in a letter to Mr. Wesley, or the president of the said Conference for the time being, to desire that such preacher be removed; and if another preacher be not sent within a limited time (during which those assistants are to give the preaching-house a regular supply), then the choice of a preacher is to remain with the trustees till the next Conference. And if the Conference should not send a supply in the same time (unless in case of sickness or death), then the election is to remain in the trustees for ever; and the person so accused and proved guilty, shall quit the premises quietly within a limited time*.

There is also provision made for indemnifying the heirs, &c. of dead, or otherwise removed, trustees, against any obligations entered into on account of those premises, whether jointly or separately. And in case it should happen that the preaching-house was too small, or otherwise inconvenient, for the major part of the congregation, the trustees had a power to enlarge or sell the same, provided the money were applied to the purchasing of other premises, and erecting another house more convenient for the inhabitants of Dewsbury.

* These trusts or conditions are not exactly ranged in the order in which they stood in the copy, but are *expressly* the same in substance, and nearly word for word, only more brief.

As I could not attend the trustees with this form, I observed, " if there was any thing they wished to add, it might be done; or any thing that could be altered, consistently with what was written above, it should be so." And when it is considered that these trustees were in general only subscribers in common with those of like circumstances in or out of society, and were understood to subscribe for a house on the methodist-plan; secondly, that they were self-elected; and thirdly, that what some of them were aiming at (though perhaps unknown to and undesigned by many of them), was a subversion of the intention of the greater part of the subscribers, and of most of them when they subscribed, viz. To build a house under the direction of Mr. Wesley, whom, from their knowledge of, confidence in, and affection for him, they could entrust with *that part* of their property, being well assured he would *never* suffer it to be otherwise applied than they designed, namely, as a place of worship for the society of people called Methodists for ever—I say, when all these things are taken into the account (as they should be by all those who would judge impartially), can any one think that the allowances here made are not as great as could be reasonably expected, or Mr. Wesley grant without betraying the confidence the subscribers in general had in *him*, which he must have done, if he had confirmed what these trustees had assumed to themselves, viz. 1st, *a full power* to exclude Mr. Wesley and his preachers at their *sole* pleasure: and, 2dly, to be the disposers of their neighbours' property at their will, and have authority to cause the house to be occupied by any individual they might think proper to call, to whom they might insure the possession, and a salary out of the profits of it for life!

Although Mr. Wesley did not expect that the absolute power of the trustees would thus operate immediately, yet he saw (and every man of candour
and

and discernment must see), that, allowing the trustees what they desired, they might exercise these powers whenever they pleased. Therefore, as a guardian of the people's property, and much more as one to whom they had committed the care of their souls on the hope of a continued change of preachers, he could not yield to the demands of the trustees. And the rather, because he well knew that the shock unavoidably attending the exertion of their assumed prerogative, could be much better sustained during his lifetime than when he rested from his labours. And shewing himself well deserving the confidence the people had reposed in him, he stood forth in their cause, that they might have him to look to for shelter when the storm arose; which advantage they would have been deprived of, had he, for the sake of his own peace, tamely submitted to the encroachments of the trustees, as well on his unquestionable right of appointing the preachers throughout the Methodist connection, as the disposal of that part of the subscribers' property, which they had entrusted with him, and not with the trustees—as it is a well-known fact, that no money would have been subscribed without the sanction of his name and guardianship; and this is true, not only in respect to the house at Dewsbury, but in respect to every preaching-house that has been *so* built in every other part of the kingdom.

Should any here ask, Why we made these deviations from our original deed? I answer, Not because we judged *that* form *unjust* or *unreasonable*, but because, 1. Occurrences have happened in the course of forty years in peculiar cases, which were not thought of when the original deed was first drawn up. These rendered some additions and alterations to that form necessary *in those cases*. And it is well known, Mr. Wesley has never been so fixed in any unessential matter, as not to be willing to alter or amend, where it appeared consistent with religion
and

and equity so to do. For this reason, in the form of *that* deed which is printed in the minutes of the Conference for this year, a clause is added to empower trustees to mortgage where there is a debt on the premises, if they chuse so to do. But, 2. The exigencies of the present case called on Mr. Wesley as a parent (and those who acted under his direction), to do all he could to meet refractory children, who were disturbing the peace of his large family, in every particular that would not in the end prove the ruin of the whole. And only to prevent *this* ruin as far as could be, did he or they oppose the desires of the trustees, which they could and would readily have granted, if they had taken *themselves only* into the account—if the *bad effects* had terminated in and with themselves; but alas! they saw them extending to posterity without end, involving every thing in endless confusion.

But, 4thly, to return: The candid Reader will naturally expect that the above formulary, drawn up at the desire of, and so framed as to meet what appeared to be the wishes of, the trustees, who had repeatedly said that they desired to preserve *itinerancy* and the *Methodist plan* *, would have met with their approbation. (But how this agrees with the receiving and *settling* of one preacher, as before stated by Dr. Coke, I leave the Reader to judge.) But to proceed. An accommodation might have been naturally expected from our propositions. But so far from this, I some time after received a paper, addressed to us as gentlemen, containing, 1st, An intimation that the trustees had met to consider of the form sent them; and, 2dly, Sundry articles or resolutions they had agreed upon at that meeting.

* And in this I really believe *many of them* were at first sincere; and being present at the above meetings to hear for themselves, they fully credited what they were told, “that *this only* could secure Methodism.” But they afterwards sacrificed their own judgment to that of others.

This was signed by nineteen names, some of which are mentioned above. This I would have inserted, were it not for its length. However, the purport was, to declare their disapprobation of, and determination *never* to agree to, *any* such deed.

When I had read this paper carefully over, I could not consider it as the effect of any consultation on the deed, but as containing animadversions on the cursory conversation of the 17th of October. As such, I thought it my duty to reply to them, and sent my reply to Mr. Greenwood to copy, and give to the trustees, as I really had not time to copy it myself. To insert this would also swell the narrative too much. I therein intimated that I only acted as a mediator in the business. In answer I received a letter from Mr. Heald, the purport of which was to assure me they *never* would submit to any deed which the Conference was concerned in, and that my mediatorship was not wished for or valued by them. In the meantime, I had sent the above resolutions to Mr. Wesley, that he might consider them, and, if he pleased, consult the Brethren in London concerning them. And, as far as ever I could learn, his chief, if not only, counsellor was Mr. Atlay, *whereby any man may judge of the credibility of what has been commonly and confidently reported, viz. that Mr. Atlay did always assure Mr. Wesley, that if he withdrew the preachers from Dewsbury, he would go to them.* And indeed, what I have said above is fully proved by the answer that covered the articles, when he returned them to me in the beginning of December. And this is confirmed by a letter of Mr. Atlay's to me some time after, which, with Mr. Wesley's and the answer to both, would also have been inserted, only for the reason before assigned, swelling the narrative too much. But suffice it to say, that I received Mr. Wesley's answer before Mr. Heald's; in reply to which I withdrew my mediation, after having intimated that if I had been a principal and
not

not a mediator in the business, I would have submitted the sense of his words and mine to impartial men. I gave up the business more freely, as I found the purport of Mr. Wesley's letter was sent to Dewsbury, and assurances added, that Mr. Wesley would meddle *no more* in the affair.

In answer to Mr. Wesley, I contradicted that part of his letter, which charged the blame of the trustees' madness (so he termed it) on the encouragement which some of the preachers gave them. For which contradiction I ask his pardon. But I did it ignorantly, and to clear my Brethren, from a full conviction that *no* preacher in the neighbourhood had any hand in the plot. But I had not *then* the least mistrust of Mr. A. not even after the letter above mentioned had been received. *And here I have a farther presumption, that Mr. A. had never given Mr. Wesley any such information as it is said he always did.* Otherwise I am confident that Mr. Wesley, in reply to the sanguine manner in which I cleared my Brethren at large, would have mentioned Mr. A.

It is true, in my answer I did not satisfy myself with vindicating my Brethren. No, this I could not do with a good conscience (which I hope ever to prefer to *all* other considerations), in the light *in which things appeared to me*; not as they referred to that place only, but to the whole connection. Therefore I remonstrated very freely with my venerable father on the subject; concluding, "that *all* our
 " houses should be on *one* plan, that we might have
 " *no more* uneasiness about settling them, and every
 " set of trustees in the three kingdoms have the
 " same right to send any preacher away as one had.
 " And if this was generally allowed, he might see
 " itinerant preaching (among the Methodists) cease
 " before his spirit returned to God! and every
 " preaching-house become an independent meeting-
 " house!" I also offered, if he and the Brethren
 agreed to put their necks under such a yoke, to put

mine also, after having publicly declared against it as anti-methodistical, and, in my view, utterly unscriptural.

5thly, It appeared by his answer that he had weighed what had been advanced, and saw some propriety in it, as therein he ordered a second meeting of the same preachers and the trustees of Dewsbury, and required me to act as a principal. This meeting was accordingly held on the 5th of February 1788.

As it had now been affirmed that a new deed had been made and executed, appointing twenty-five trustees in all, we begged to see this deed with all the tenderness we were capable of for some hours, but *all* in vain. It had also been said that the subscribers *never* designed *that* house to be under Mr. Wesley, but under the management of the trustees. This caused much altercation, and had been the reason of Mr. Valton's being applied to for the truth of this assertion. His answer, as given by Dr. Coke, was received before, and in part read or rehearsed that day. But when no argument could prevail for the least concession or proposal for accommodation from the trustees, we offered them,

1. That the subscribers should have the question proposed to them, when we had agreed upon the form of it, by some indifferent person; and if it appeared *that* was the case (as they said) *by the majority* of them, we would give *all* up; if otherwise, any who desired it, should have their subscriptions returned.
2. That it should be left to men of the law to determine, they chusing one counsellor and we another, and those two a third; or, if it pleased them better, to private men, either in or out of society. For what reason, I leave others to judge; but this common, and (as it is generally supposed) most equitable manner of deciding differences, was spurned with the utmost indignation. Some of them said, "What! you are for law, are ye? You
" are changed from the gospel to the law. We
" are

“are for the gospel still.” The justness of such declamations I submit to the determination of the Reader. We were for peace on any reasonable terms, being well assured such use of law is not against the gospel. Others fled out immediately, and returned no more that evening, as far as I saw, it being then between four and five o’clock. However, they met by themselves, while we took some refreshment, and procured a letter of Mr. Wesley’s that had been brought me from Sheffield, which came to hand, after I had retired from the meeting; which letter, among other instructions of the most positive kind, relative to the business we were then upon, contained a desire, “that the featholders should be informed that they were not to pay any more rent till the matter was settled between him and the trustees.” As a considerable number of them returned, we told them of this letter, and that something decisive must be done that night, as there was to be preaching; assuring them we must obey the order we had received. We therefore again resumed our old request for a sight of their deed, declaring we had the utmost unwillingness to do any thing which would widen the breach. This we continued to do in vain, till half past seven, so that preaching was nearly ended. We then agreed to go together into the pulpit, and deliver Mr. Wesley’s message. The burden being laid upon me to speak, we went in deep grief, and met the trustees, or several of them, at the preaching-house door, whom I intreated, for God’s sake, if they had any thing to offer that would in any degree make for peace, to do it even then, as we must otherwise do, by Mr. Wesley’s order, what would surely grieve them. They said, “No; we might do as we pleased.” I then again told them, if they would only shew their deed, we would not proceed. This they still refused. We then went into the pulpit, and my feelings were such as I

never felt before, since the first time I preached in the Foundery near Moorfields. I introduced the subject with such feelings of grief as I rarely experience, as all that were present with me can witness, and delivered, not my own, but Mr. Wesley's, desire to the congregation then present, concluding with prayer. It is said, this was done with the utmost warmth and heat of passion. This I also bear for his sake, in whose cause I acted, only observing, if I have any consciousness of my own feelings, they were then those of deep grief. I should just observe, that when we were in the pulpit, and I had begun, they sent a message to Mr. Greenwood that they would shew their writing; to which I replied, it was *now* too late, as I had entered upon my business *. Yet we were given to understand after we came in (I know not by whom) that they would shew it in the morning. I think John Robinson came in either before or after, to whom we either read or related the substance of Mr. Wesley's letter brought from Sheffield. After waiting some hours in the morning, he came to inform us that they had resolved not to shew us any deed.

We then drew up these proceedings, to send them to Mr. Wesley, and some proposals we judged needful to lay before him relative to the business, particularly, that Mr. Valton, who received the subscriptions, should be sent to make the inquiry, whether the subscribers did subscribe for a house to be under the management of Mr. Wesley, or the trustees, in respect to the point of *receiving* and *rejecting* preach-

* This step has been exceedingly blamed by some, and by others said to be unchristian. I may not be a judge herein. Yet most say, on an impartial review of it, that they cannot see it to be so, as no one is deemed unjust or unchristian, who, in cases of dispute respecting premisses occupied by indifferent persons, desires that the rents may be retained till the matter be decided; especially if he who does so offers also to let disinterested men decide for him immediately.

ers, as it is only this which is disputed. And as Mr. Valton declined this on account of his health, all the rest were dropt, as they hinged upon that, and the matter rested till Mr. Wesley came to Manchester in April last. Then it was mentioned, and the propriety of Mr. Wesley's visiting them considered.

It was then also affirmed, that one just come from London had in public company declared, that he personally heard Mr. Atlay say, in company also, "That if Mr. Wesley withdrew the preachers from Dewsbury, he would go there; and that he had promised the trustees he would do so." This was no less strange to Mr. Wesley than to all present, which it could not have been, had Mr. A. acted with that candour with which it is said he always did, *viz.* in telling Mr. Wesley from the very beginning he would do so. It was then agreed that Mr. Wesley should write to the trustees, and his going to Dewsbury or not going should depend upon their answer. What that was, I am not certain; only I have heard it was no concession or invitation. This I do not affirm; I only suppose it was neither, as he did not go. It was then further agreed, that he should draw up a hand-bill, to be dispersed among the people, as it was believed that many of them were unacquainted with the proper state of the case. This he also did.

6thly. Thus, as far as I know, things remained till the Conference. But in July I heard that Mr. Wesley and a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Dewsbury had exchanged some letters on the subject, some of which I saw, with their answers; in all of which I could not learn that Mr. Wesley had varied from his judgment in December 1787, or from his proposal to the trustees by Mr. Atlay.

The Conference began in London on Monday, July 28th, 1788. On the Tuesday evening, after preaching, a meeting was held in Mr. Wesley's
room

room with Mr. Atlay, and with most of those who had been concerned in this business. In the beginning of that meeting, Mr. Atlay said, " He did not doubt but if he was to go down he could soon settle matters with the trustees." Mr. Wesley, or some one present, asked, When he could go? He said, " About the end of September, or some time in October" (as far as I recollect). To this it was replied, " That would be too late, as something must be done one way or the other before the Conference breaks up." I then said, there was no difficulty in settling with the trustees of Dewsbury, for they were fixed, and *any one* who would give them their desire might settle with them at once. But no man ought to be allowed to go on that business with an unlimited commission. No; his terms of accommodation should be as they had been from the first, " Let the accusations be proved, and then the preachers removed." To this all agreed. I added then, that I thought Mr. A. the most improper man that could be sent in behalf of the Conference, after what I had heard; and, turning immediately to him, said, " Mr. Atlay, it is said that you have long ago promised the trustees of Dewsbury, that if Mr. Wesley withdrew the preachers *on this account*, you would come and supply them. I ask you then, before God and these Brethren, have you made *any* such promise, or have you not?"

He answered, " Mr. Mather, you are *very* sharp upon me, what harm have I done you? I would rather die *this* minute than leave Mr. Wesley and the connection." I then said, " Mr. Atlay, you have done me personally no wrong that I know of. Nor do I ask what you would do. My question is, What have you done in *this* case? Answer yea or no; there is no need of evasions, and we will not be put off with them." Mr. Atlay then said, " To be sure I did say so, when the
" matter

" matter first began, but I never imagined you or
 " they would put me to it." I then said, " Judge
 " ye, if Mr. Atlay be a proper person to send there
 " in your behalf." And I again asked, if he had
 not desired the people of Malton not to settle their
 house on the Conference plan; which he also acknowledged.

In the subsequent conversation it was agreed, that
 Mr. Wesley should write one letter in the morning,
 and Mr. Atlay another; but that Mr. Atlay's should
 not be sent till those then present had seen it. Accordingly, at six in the morning Mr. Wesley gave
 me his letter, which was as follows:

To the Trustees of Dewsbury.

London, July 30th, 1788.

My dear Brethren,

The question between us is, " By whom shall
 " the preachers sent from time to time to Dewsbury
 " be judged?" You say, " By the trustees." I
 say, " By their peers—the preachers met in Conference."
 You say, " Give up this, and we will
 " receive them." I say, " I cannot, I dare not
 " give up this." Therefore if you will not receive
 them on these terms, you renounce connection with

Your affectionate Brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

As I went down with this in my hand, I called on
 Mr. Atlay, and told him it was Mr. Wesley's letter.
 He said, what he was now writing was his; and we
 agreed that Dr. Coke, Mr. Pawson, Thompson,
 and several others, should meet in his room after the
 breaking up of the Conference that afternoon, and
 read it, and drink a dish of tea together, that we
 might explain matters, as he still thought I bore hard
 upon him the night before. Thus we agreed, and I
 then assured him, I had no personal dislike to him,
 but

But such conduct I could not approve of, and ever thought it best to tell a man what was said of him. So we parted till the afternoon.

We then met, and the letter was read, to which I immediately objected, declaring, that it gave the trustees *all they desired*—that the calling in of assistants was *all a farce*, as they were only executioners of the *unanimous will of the trustees*, and not judges. This occasioned a second reading, when the Brethren present differed from me in judgment. A farther altercation ensued, which ended in my giving the matter up; especially as the letter had been read to Mr. Wesley, and he must have understood it in the sense in which my Brethren did, or he *never* would have signed it; as in *my* sense it would have flatly contradicted what he had wrote in the morning, which was then upon the table. I then said, “Well, I ought “to resign on such evidence.” However, I desired an exact copy of Mr. Atlay’s letter might be then taken on the same half sheet Mr. Wesley had wrote his upon, and that all present should attest it, which copy was accordingly taken by Dr. Coke, and signed by all present, of whom Mr. Atlay was one, who had been, during the whole dispute, against *my* sense of the letter. Mr. A.’s letter was sent off that same night, and I retained the copy and Mr. Wesley’s letter.

However, the trustees, on receiving this letter, saw *for once* with my eyes, but by no anointing salve sent by me. Whether the cover (if it was sent in one) contained any, I know not. Their answer to Mr. Wesley was returned in a cover to Mr. Atlay. We had reason to believe, by James Blackburn’s letter to Mr. Wesley, which referred to it as sent a post before, that Mr. A. had received it; but we heard nothing of it till *that* informed us. James Blackburn’s letter being delivered to Mr. Wesley in the Conference, he gave it immediately to me, desiring I would read it. On seeing it refer to another letter,

as above, I said, " Sir, I cannot read *this* letter, " as it refers to one sent by Mr. Heald. Have you " received it ?" He answered, " No." Mr. Atlay was then sent for, and the messenger was ordered to desire him to bring with him a letter for Mr. Wesley, which he had received from Mr. Heald. He came, and on being asked why *that* letter had not been delivered as soon as received, he said, " You were busy, and I designed to deliver it to " Mr. Wesley by and by." *Observe*, Mr. A. knew that the Conference was to break up finally in a few hours. On the letters and answers being read, a conversation took place on the sense of Mr. Atlay's words, which called for him to put his own sense upon them, which was exactly the sense he had heard me contend for before ; and *that* wherein, as the answers shewed, the trustees understood them.

It was then that the Conference *unanimously* refused to go to Dewsbury on any such terms ; and also agreed that a fresh deputation should be sent to the trustees, and a letter written by Dr. Coke to appoint another meeting, and to inform them of the cause, the men, the time, and the business of it, and promising them preachers (Mr. Shaw and Mr. Percival), if the deputies and they could agree concerning the grand point in dispute, *the judges by whom the preachers, if necessary, should be tried during the intervals of the Conference.*

The Doctor's letter was sent on the 7th of August 1788, and on the 14th I met Mr. Pawson, Thompson, Greenwood, and Percival at Dewsbury ; and soon after, the trustees came to us. After prayer, the business was opened by reading a copy of the Doctor's letter. We then proceeded to ask if they really had a deed executed. It was answered, " Yes." We then wished to see it : it was answered, " It is not convenient for us to shew it." We then inquired whether they would make any supplement to it, as Mr. Wesley and the Conference desired,

desired, according to the Doctor's letter. They answered, " No." Nor could we reach any farther, or obtain the least proposal towards an accommodation. Seeing all was in vain, we concluded as directed by Mr. Wesley and the whole body of the Conference, desiring Mr. Greenwood and Mr. Percival, and their families, to remove as soon as might be; and that it might be published that Mr. Thompson would preach in the street the next Lord's day; which he did at noon, and published me for the Sunday after; at which time I also attended, and gave the people notice at noon, that as many reports were spread concerning the present business, I would give them a short account of it after I had done preaching at night; which I did, and assigned as a reason for our long silence, whereby many had been misled (as they had only heard one side chiefly, *viz.* that of the trustees), that we were parents, and could we have still concealed our children's weakness, we would.

I then published for Mr. Pawson, who came, and on an invitation from Joseph Bennet, *sen.* and a slight promise that matters should be made up, went and preached twice in the house, and met the trustees alone, making some conditional proposals, which were sent to Mr. Wesley. This occasioned Mr. Pawson to spend some part of the week following among the trustees and people, and to preach again in the house on the Wednesday evening. I am fully assured he meant well. But it was not likely to answer any end, as he received no proposals for an accommodation, touching the grand point in dispute.

Thus I have given a true relation of the whole affair, since I have been concerned in it, and must leave every man now to judge for himself. And as I have already acknowledged to the world, that I have not made that use of the foundation laid in my youth, in respect to correctness, by being early initiated

tiated in classical learning, having found other methods for employing my time, which I then judged more necessary to pursue; I therefore hope that an allowance will be made for such defects as may be found in this Supplement, as a fair statement of the truth, for the benefit of all who may desire in this case to know it, is all that was aimed at by

Their servant in Christ,

BARNESLEY,
September 18, 1788.

A. MATHER.

P. S. It is worthy of observation, that Mr. Wesley, notwithstanding what he had heard at Manchester—what was acknowledged in his own room—what was proved to have been done in the case of the letters—did not still give Mr. Atlay notice to quit his service, or even expect he would on the 7th of August, at four in the afternoon. It is true, when Mr. A. had acknowledged the sense of his letter to be so different from what Mr. Wesley understood it to be when he brought it to him to sign, and some words ensued, as stated by the Doctor, Mr. Wesley did then say, “John, if you mean to leave me, you may. I have another, I can put in your place.” Yet Mr. Wesley afterwards seemed to think no more of it, as may easily be seen from what follows.

Being to depart from London that evening, I called on Mr. Wesley, to take my leave of him;
C and

and having been told by one who had heard Mr. A. say that day, that he would leave Mr. Wesley's book-room and go to Dewsbury, I naturally supposed they had had an interview, and that Mr. A. had given him warning accordingly. I therefore took the liberty to say, "Pray, Sir, whom have you got for the book-room?" He answered, "No one. I do not want any." I then told him what I had heard. To which he replied, "I know nothing of it. But I will know directly. Come with me to John Atlay, and I will ask him." As we went down stairs, Dr. Coke met us, to whom he said, "Come along with me." At the door I met Mr. Henry Moore, who was appointed assistant for London. I took him also. We found Mrs. A. in the counting-room, whom Mr. Wesley addressed, by saying, "Sister Atlay, where is John?" She said, "Up stairs, Sir." He said, "Call him." On his coming into the room, Mr. Wesley said, "John, are you going to leave me? If you are, let me know, that I may provide another before I leave the town" (which he was to do on the Sunday evening following). Mr. A. replied nearly in the manner and words he did on the 29th of August, without saying he was, or was not. He was then desired to give Mr. Wesley a positive answer, as by what he then said, Mr. Wesley could know nothing of his mind.

Mr. A. then said, "How long warning would you desire, Sir?" Mr. Wesley said, "A quarter of a year, to be sure." Mr. Atlay then said, "I thought a month would be sufficient; in three the people will be all scattered; and I was writing to Dewsbury when you called me." Here was still no warning, either given or taken, as appears from what passed on Mr. Wesley's coming out; for, shaking Mr. A. by the hand, he said, "John, I think we shall not part yet." Mr. A. spoke much as before. But here every one may see
Mr.

Mr. Wesley's tenderness to Mr. A. Who besides would have acted thus ?

I hear Mr. A. did send him warning some time after, which Mr. Wesley accepted. But who could have blamed Mr. Wesley or the Conference, if they had formally renounced Mr. A. on the 6th of August ? For whether his conduct, *considered abstractedly*, might have been good or bad, is not the present question—but what it was towards them as a member of the connection. In this point of view, his conduct, one should think, hardly needs a comment ; it speaks for itself to all candid men.

APPENDIX

A P P E N D I X.

IT will be necessary to inform the public, 1st, that Mr. Pawson, in order to meet the Trustees, proposed to them, "That the three assistant preachers to be called in, and the twenty-five trustees, should be considered as one body; and if the majority of this body should agree that the accused preacher was guilty, he should then be put away." 2dly, He and Mr. Thompson agreed further, "That, if the majority of the society or congregation should agree that the accused preacher was guilty, in that case he should be put away." But these Proposals were also rejected.

ALEXANDER MATHER.

JOHN PAWSON.

WILLIAM THOMPSON.

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